

Finance and Administration Cabinet STANDARD PROCEDURE	PAGE: 1 of 7
ISSUED BY: Office of Administrative Services, Division of Human Resources	
EFFECTIVE DATE: 3/3/05, Revised 11/1/06	
PROCEDURE # 2.1	
SUBJECT: Employee Educational Assistance	
DISTRIBUTION CODE: A,B,C,D CONTACT: Director, Division of Human Resources (502) 564-7233	

I. PURPOSE

Subject to applicable statutes and regulations and the availability of budgetary funds, the Finance and Administration Cabinet (Cabinet) shall participate in the [Employee Educational Assistance program](#) administered by the Office of Government Training (OGT). This procedure defines the requirements and processes that apply to Cabinet employees seeking educational assistance.

II. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

A. Eligible Expenses

Educational assistance may be granted to pay for approved expenses of qualified employees who, during their employment with the Cabinet, pursue college course work that is either directly related to the position they currently occupy or related to a position in the Cabinet to which they aspire. Educational assistance shall be granted to any employee who is directed to complete specific courses to aid in performance of assigned duties.

Approved expenses include:

- Tuition (up to that charged by a state institution. See E. 3)
- Registration fees; laboratory fees and computer fees;
- Required textbook expenses; and
- Examination fees required by the institution for course credit (DANTES, CLEP).

Educational assistance shall not include:

- Late registration fees;
- Parking or transportation costs;
- Graduation fees;
- Records and transcripts; or
- Office supplies.

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B. Eligible Employees

The Cabinet shall ensure that race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, or age are not factors considered for participation in the Cabinet's educational assistance program.

Only qualified Cabinet employees who have no outstanding tuition reimbursement obligations are eligible for educational assistance. A qualified employee is defined as:

- A permanent, full-time classified employee, who has satisfactorily completed the initial state employment probationary period, demonstrates responsible time and attendance, meets job responsibilities, and has no pending disciplinary action nor record of disciplinary action for the past six months, or
- An employee in the unclassified service who has completed six (6) months continuous full-time state employment service, demonstrates responsible time and attendance, and meets job responsibilities, or
- An employee of the Cabinet whose immediate supervisor requests a written waiver from the Cabinet's Director of Human Resources. The waiver must include documentation that demonstrates that the nature of the work justifies the educational assistance.

C. Requirements For Course(s) To Be Job Related

The course(s) requested must have a clear and direct relationship to the work of the Finance and Administration Cabinet. If the employee is seeking an associate, baccalaureate or master's degree directly related to Cabinet employment, all required courses shall be deemed to have a clear and direct relationship to the work of the Cabinet. Educational assistance may be granted for required courses needed to obtain licensing or certification, when such licensing or certification is related to work performed in the Cabinet and obtained from an accredited institution of higher learning or a state approved institution or agency.

D. Use Of State Time And Resources Prohibited

With the approval of the employee's immediate supervisor, division director and the Cabinet's Director of Human Resources, an employee shall use any accrued annual or compensatory leave time to attend a course(s) at any time during normal work hours. Courses may not be attended on state time.

Course work shall be completed during non-work hours and may not be completed using state resources or computers.

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E. Educational Institutions

1. Franklin or Adjoining County Employees

Employees who live in or whose work station is in Franklin or an adjoining county may receive educational assistance only for courses at Kentucky State University (KSU) unless the course or degree program is not offered by Kentucky State University or, if offered, is not available at a time outside the employee's normal work hours.

These restrictions are the result of Kentucky's Higher Education Desegregation Plan in response to the U.S. Office of Civil Rights Letter of January 16, 1981, Final Revision, January, 1982, which requires that the use of state educational assistance funds be approved only for Kentucky State University courses or programs when the course or program is offered and available at that university, unless otherwise restricted by preexisting contractual obligations or where geographically inappropriate. These restrictions uniformly apply.

2. Kentucky State Colleges or Universities

Subject to the restrictions provided in E. 1. above, educational assistance shall be available for all Cabinet approved courses or degree programs offered by Kentucky state colleges or universities at the tuition rates charged by those institutions.

3. Other Educational Institutions

An employee may request approval for courses or degree programs at other accredited educational institutions only if the course is not offered at a Kentucky college or university in the current semester or if the employee does not reside in Franklin or an adjoining county. The Educational Assistance Justification Document (7. Forms 2.1/a) shall be used to explain the exception and also include a copy of the institution's official description of the desired course or degree program. In cases of private or out-of-state schools, the Cabinet will pay that portion of the tuition up to the amount that is charged by a state university for a similar program.

4. Web-based Courses

An employee may take courses on-line with the approval of the employee's supervisor. The amounts paid for these courses shall be subject to the same restrictions as traditional classroom courses.

F. Maximum Allowable Hours

Educational assistance granted by the Cabinet for an employee shall not exceed the following:

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Undergraduate Studies: Up to two (2) courses with a maximum of eight (8) credit hours for each regular term of the institution and on (1) course with a maximum of four (4) credit hours for each summer term; or

Graduate or Professional Studies: Four (4) semester hours for each regular term of the institution; or four (4) semester hours for each summer term.

G. Appeals

Notice of denial of any properly requested educational assistance shall be given in writing to the employee. Such denial notice shall include the reason(s) for denial. If the employee wishes to appeal the denial, the employee and his supervisor shall present their appeal to the Executive Director of Administrative Services.

III. OBLIGATIONS OF THE EMPLOYEE

Employees who receive educational assistance from the Cabinet are obligated to:

- Complete and receive a satisfactory grade of at least a "C" in undergraduate studies or at least a "B" in graduate studies. A grade of "I" or "W" shall not be considered as a satisfactory grade. An Incomplete or "I" must be completed within 30 days of the end of the course, otherwise the employee shall be responsible for reimbursement.
- Present to the Director of Human Resources an official grade report as evidence of a satisfactory grade in the course(s) for which assistance was granted. The grade report must be submitted by the employee within thirty (30) working days after scheduled completion of the course(s). The record may be the official grade document or a copy of an electronic record of the grade from a web site. The Director of Human Resources reserves the right to request that an official transcript(s) be submitted at any time.
- Maintain employment with state government for a minimum of six (6) months after completion of course(s) which are not taken as part of a degree program.
- Remain with state government for at least two years after successful completion of a degree program for which educational assistance the Cabinet has paid at least 75% of the degree program cost. This applies to applicants beginning a degree program after July 1, 2005.

IV. REIMBURSEMENT OBLIGATIONS

Employees not fulfilling the obligations of this procedure shall be responsible for reimbursement of all expenses paid by the Cabinet. If payment is not received, or payment arrangements have not been made with the Cabinet's Director of Human

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Resources within five (5) working days from the date the notice of resignation is submitted, any amount due shall automatically be deducted from the employee's last paycheck. If the check is insufficient to cover the amount, the Cabinet shall pursue civil action to recover the monies owed. Reimbursement requirements set forth above shall not apply to an employee who fails to meet requirements due to layoff or reduction in work force.

V. PROGRAM PROCESSES

A. Required Records And Forms

The Cabinet Division of Human Resources shall maintain such files and records to ensure the proper administration of the employee program. A copy of the application and the final grade shall be placed in the employee's personnel file. The forms required with each application include:

1. Education Justification Document (7. Forms 2.1/a)

The employee's supervisor shall submit an Educational Assistance Justification Document (7. Forms. 2.1/a) along with the application for each request for tuition assistance. In cases where any exception to the procedure is sought the document must include the reasons for the exception and shall serve as a letter of exception. Examples of exceptions include not attending KSU or requesting payment of full tuition to a private or out-of-state university. If the employee changes degree programs, a new Educational Assistance Justification Document shall be submitted for consideration.

2. Employee Educational Assistance Form (7. Forms 2.1/b)

The Cabinet requires the employee to submit a completed Employee Education Tuition Assistance Form (7. Forms 2.1/b) to the Division of Human Resources for educational assistance approval for courses taken each term.

The employee shall complete all required information requested on the form. Complete information includes:

- Institution, official course title, course number, credit hours and the degree level
- Date the class begins and ends and days and hours class meets;
- A total itemized cost of tuition amount, required text books, computer fees and laboratory fees;
- Billing code; and
- All appropriate signatures.

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B. Course Grade

The employee shall submit a record of the grade to the Division of Human Resources within 30 days of the end of the semester.

C. Application Submission Dates

The application form and any necessary documentation shall be submitted so that it reaches the Cabinet's Division of Human Resources at least 30 workdays prior to the beginning of course work. An incomplete form or documentation or receipt of the form less than 30 days prior to the start of the course shall be sufficient cause for denial of an education assistance request and shall not be processed.

The Cabinet shall make payment for tuition, related fees and books directly to the educational institution upon receipt of invoices at the beginning of the course. Expenses for books and required course materials that are not purchased from the institution may be reimbursed to the student upon submission and arrival of an appropriate voucher. All bills and vouchers related to this program shall be submitted to the Finance and Administration Cabinet, Division of Administrative Support Services.

D. Approval Process

An application for educational assistance shall receive agency approval prior to class registration. This shall include:

- the immediate supervisor and the employee's Commissioner (indicating that the course is related to the employee's position and the agency fund that is to be used to pay listed expenses)
- the Cabinet's Director of Human Resources, and the Executive Director of the Office of Administrative Services (indicating authorization of the course, the institution and the amount that shall be approved for payment.)
- Any applications for courses not offered by KSU or in excess of KSU tuition shall be submitted to the Office of Government Training from the Division of Human Resources. If approved by OGT, the request shall then be sent to the Executive Director of Administrative Services for verification of funding and approval.
- If approved, the application shall be returned to the Director of Human Resources who shall forward the original to the employee and a copy to the Division of Administrative Support Services.

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E. Forms

- [Finance and Administration Cabinet Educational Assistance Justification Document](#) (7. Forms 2.1/a)
- [Finance and Administration Cabinet Employee Educational Assistance Form](#) (7. Forms 2.1b)
- [OGT Employee Educational Assistance Program](#)

NO STANDARD PROCEDURE MAY BE REVISED BY ADDENDUM, MEMORANDUM OR ANY OTHER MEANS OTHER THAN THOSE SET OUT IN STANDARD PROCEDURE # 1.1 ENTITLED " CREATION, REVISION AND RESCISSION OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION CABINET POLICIES AND PROCEDURES"

DISTRIBUTION CODES:

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C. Branch

**D. Cabinet Personnel
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